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ABSTRACT

A Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory (TSAI) was developed from the literature on reading, adult basic education, literacy education, and comments of professionals in order to provide the volunteer literacy tutor an opportunity to compare his or her self-perceptions regarding tutoring abilities and knowledge to attributes and competencies considered important by experienced volunteer literacy tutors. By using the self-assessment inventory, tutors can identify their strengths and weaknesses and tutor trainers can plan for preservice or inservice education programs to meet their educational needs. Competencies and attributes selected were chosen because of their ability to be taught, their importance in the tutoring situation, or their high rating by volunteer tutors. The TSAI has a stem followed by a series of statements to be rated on a five-point scale. The items are divided into six subsections under two major headings: knowledge and awareness (attributes) and competencies. The TSAI was designed for immediate scoring by the tutor. (The TSAI is contained in the appendix of this document.) (KC)

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IDENTIFYING INSERVICE TOPICS FOR VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTORS

by

Barbara E. Brown

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IDENTIFYING INSERVICE TOPICS FOR VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTORS

The purpose of the Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory (See Appendix A) is to provide the volunteer literacy tutor an opportunity to compare his or her self-perceptions regarding his or her own tutoring abilities and knowledge to attributes and competencies considered important by experience volunteer literacy tutors. By using the self-assessment inventory, tutors should be able to identify their tutoring strengths and weaknesses. This should enable the tutor and tutor trainers to know the areas of need for additional training or information.

Development

The Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory (TSAI) was taken from the Tutor Competency and Attribute List (Brown, 1981). The Tutor Competency and Attribute List was developed from the literature on reading, adult basic education and literacy education. This list also reflected the comments and suggestions of a panel of adult education and literacy education professionals (See Appendix B). Experienced tutors rated and ranked the competencies and attributes of the Tutor Competency and Attribute List.

Competencies and attributes that were selected for the TSAI were chosen for the following reasons: (1) The competency or attribute is one which can be taught or improved through additional training or information provided to the tutor; (2) the competency or attribute needs to be emphasized due to its importance to the tutoring situation; and/or (3) the item received a rating of at least 3.40 on a 5 point scale when rated by the volunteer tutors. Competencies and attributes that were omitted were ones that would be difficult or impossible to teach in an in-service program.

The directions and the items used for the TSAI were rewritten as needed so as to obtain a high school readibility level as measured by the Flesch Reading Ease Formula and the Fry Readibility Formula. The Flesch formula is commonly used with adult materials (Abram, 1981). The Fry formula has a high correlation with the Flesch (.96) and is commonly used in general education (Gilliland, 1972:100). The short length of the TSAI permitted determining readibility levels that were only approximate.

Format

The TSAI has a stem followed by a series of statements to be rated on a 5 point scale. The items have been divided into six subsections under two major headings: Part 1: Knowledge and Awareness (Attributes); and Part 2: Competencies. The total number of competencies and attributes assessed is 41.

The TSAI was designed for immediate scoring by the tutor. The tutor finds the average score for each subsection and compares the score to the rating scale. This method of scoring was selected so that the tutor would have available together the competency and attribute statements and scores.

Suggested Uses for the TSAI

The Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory (TSAI) has been designed to assist with identifying training needs. There are four possible ways in which it may be used:

1. For identifying pre-service training needs. Volunteer tutors bring different competencies and attributes to the tutoring situation. In order to tailor pre-service training to the volunteer tutor's needs, tutor trainers could ask the trainees to take the TSAI prior to the start of the pre-service training sessions.
2. For identifying in-service training needs. Tutor trainers by administering the TSAI whole or in part could identify which topics would be the most appropriate or most needed by the tutors.
3. As a check to obtain information whether an inservice training program was effective. If appropriate sections of the TSAI are administered as pre- and post-checks, in-service programs can be evaluated for tutor perceived effectiveness.

4. To permit practicing tutors to evaluate their own performance or identify their own training needs. A tutor may desire to evaluate their own knowledge particularly if he or she is experiencing some difficulty in the tutoring situation.

References

Abram, M.J. Readibility: Its use in adult education. Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years, 1981, 4 (5), pp 8-9; 30-31.

Brown, B.E. The identification of major competencies and attributes needed by volunteer literacy tutors of adults and the development of a tutor self-assessment inventory. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Illinois University, 1981.

Gilliland, J. Readibility. London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1972.

APPENDIX A

TUTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

TUTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

Purpose

The purpose of the Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory is to give you an opportunity to identify your tutoring strengths and weaknesses. Filling it out may help you decide in which areas you need additional training or information.

Directions

The Tutor Self-Assessment Inventory has 41 statements about abilities and knowledge needed by tutors. These were identified as important by experienced tutors.

Mark your responses on the inventory. Circle the numeral which best describes your own feelings as to your ability or knowledge regarding that statement. The five levels of the rating scale are defined as follows:

(1) I have MINIMAL ability in or knowledge about this.

(2) I have LITTLE ability in or knowledge about this.

(3) I have MODERATE ability in or knowledge about this.

(4) I have CONSIDERABLE ability in or knowledge about this.

(5) I have EXTENSIVE ability in our knowledge about this.

Example

To what degree are you knowledgeable about the following:

01. The importance of increasing tutoring skills and knowledge. 1 2 (3) 4 5 3

Scoring

After you have finished the inventory, put the number of your

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rating for each statement on the line next ot it on the far right. Total this column for each section and divide by the number of statements in that section. This will give you the average score for each section. Comparing your score in the various sections will show those areas in which you feel most need for improvement.

Part I: Knowledge and Awareness

Characteristics of the Adult Learner

To what degree are you knowledgeable about the following factors which may affect adult learning:

	MINIMAL ability in or knowledge about	LITTLE ability in or knowledge about	MODERATE ability in or knowledge about	CONSIDERABLE ability in or knowledge about	EXTENSIVE ability in or knowledge about	
01. The life experiences of the student.	1	2	3	4	5	____
02. The financial situation of the student.	1	2	3	4	5	____
03. The physical health of the student.	1	2	3	4	5	____
04. The competing role responsibilities of the student.	1	2	3	4	5	____
05. The possibility of limited motivation on the part of the student	1	2	3	4	5	____
06. The possibility that the student may have a poor self-image as a learner.	1	2	3	4	5	____
07. The student's need to feel important and accepted.	1	2	3	4	5	____
08. The need for active student participation in the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5	____
				Average Score		____
				8)		____ total

Interpersonal Relationships To what degree are you knowledgeable about the following:	MINIMAL	LITTLE	MODERATE	CONSIDERABLE	EXTENSIVE	
01. The importance of being a friend and advisor.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
02. The importance of encouraging the student to accept responsibility for his/her own learning.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
03. The need to foster the student's belief that he/she can learn.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
04. The need to listen carefully to the student.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
05. The importance of positive, sincere comments to the student.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
06. The influence of non-verbal behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
07. The importance of encouraging the student to ask questions and give opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
08. The importance of knowing when and how to end a tutoring relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	_____
						_____
					8)	

Personal and Administrative Responsibilities

To what degree are you able to:

01. Plan for each lesson.	1	2	3	4	5	_____

	MINIMAL	LITTLE	MODERATE	CONSIDERABLE	EXTENSIVE	
02. Give clear explanations and instructions.	1	2	3	4	5	____
03. Ask questions that further learning.	1	2	3	4	5	____
04. Locate and use a wide variety of reading materials.	1	2	3	4	5	____
05. Obtain assistance when needed.	1	2	3	4	5	____
06. Keep accurate records on the student's progress.	1	2	3	4	5	____
07. Maintain communications with the sponsoring agency.	1	2	3	4	5	____
08. Provide information about community resources (e.g., job placement, health services, and counseling).	1	2	3	4	5	____
						____
					8)	____

Part 2: Competencies

Reading Skills and Instructional Methods

To what degree do you:

01. Know techniques to promote readiness (e.g. visual discrimination and auditory discrimination).	1	2	3	4	5	____
02. Know word analysis skills (e.g. decoding, spelling, phonics, sight words, and context clues).	1	2	3	4	5	____

	MINIMAL	LITTLE	MODERATE	CONSIDERABLE	EXTENSIVE	
03. Know comprehension instructional techniques.	1	2	3	4	5	____
04. Know vocabulary development techniques.	1	2	3	4	5	____
05. Know appropriate use of oral reading.	1	2	3	4	5	____
06. Know how to teach the basic study skills.	1	2	3	4	5	____
07. Know how to use the language experience method.	1	2	3	4	5	____
08. Know how to use manuscript as an aid to reading.	1	2	3	4	5	____
						____
					8)	____

Assessment

To what degree are you able to:

01. Use appropriate diagnostic techniques to identify which skills need development.	1	2	3	4	5	____
02. Use appropriate techniques to assess student progress.	1	2	3	4	5	____
03. Determine a student's learning style and rate.	1	2	3	4	5	____

	MINIMAL	LITTLE	MODERATE	CONSIDERABLE	EXTENSIVE	
04. Identify students with special learning problems.	1	2	3	4	5	____
05. Refer a student for professional diagnosis if needed.	1	2	3	4	5	____
						____
					5)	____

Implementation of Instruction

To what degree are you able to:

01. Plan an instructional program adapted to the student's needs.	1	2	3	4	5	____
02. Choose appropriate instructional techniques and reading methods for the student's program.	1	2	3	4	5	____
03. Choose or prepare "custom-made" instructional materials for the student's program	1	2	3	4	5	____
04. Regularly provide the student with a useful assessment of his/her progress.	1	2	3	4	5	____
						____
					4)	____

PROFILE SHEET

Use this sheet for comparing your score in the various sections with the rating scale. Take the average score from each section and put it on the appropriate blank. See Example.

EXAMPLE

AVERAGE	SECTION
3.6	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT LEARNER
1.2	INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS (least confidence or competence in)
4.1	PERSONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES (most confidence or competence in)
2.2	READING SKILLS AND INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS
3.4	ASSESSEMENT
2.5	IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

FOR YOUR PROFILE

AVERAGE	SECTION
_____	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT LEARNER
_____	INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
_____	PERSONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES
_____	READING SKILLS AND INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS
_____	ASSESSMENT
_____	IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

Compare the averages to this rating scale.

1 I have MINIMAL ability of knowledge in this area.
2 I have LITTLE ability or knowledge in this area.
3 I have MODERATE ability or knowledge in this area.
4 I have CONSIDERABLE ability or knowledge in this area.
5 I have EXTENSIVE ability or knowledge in this area.

APPENDIX B

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